

Re: HB 1196 Sec. 14

3/19/11

The Cornwall Conservation Trust, a land trust in northwest Connecticut, **STRONGLY OPPOSES** the proposed swap of public for private land in Haddam.

We are not neighbors, but our concerns are:

1. The Connecticut River needs all the protection it can get. It is the state's prime waterway. It is an invaluable resource and should not be subject to undue development by private parties.
2. In the recent past the state DEP has come out against this proposal. The state presumably acquired the land because it is special, irreplaceable and of environmental significance. There should be no change in such logic just because private parties want to develop it.
3. Such a swap would establish a horrible precedent for the future. It might subject ALL state-owned properties -- including the very large amount of state forest in our town -- to swapping with private parties. This would undermine our land trust's mission and would bring great harm to our town.
4. Principle should trump expediency.

Hector Prud'homme, President, Cornwall Conservation Trust